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ABSTRACT

This book highlights the role of citizens in solving public problems. Part 1 presents the insights of several successful Americans to show why the rethinking of self-interest, power, and public life is the key to bringing new meaning into the lives of Americans. Part 2 describes changes occurring across the United States, which are conceptualized as "a quickening in the evolution of democracy." It describes the efforts of citizens involved in tackling some of the country's biggest problems--in education, government, human services, employment, and the media. Examples of ways in which people have applied the concepts in part 1 are also described, with a focus on shared decision making. Part 3 examines the skills needed in order to be effective in one-on-one or group interactions. The qualities of character that can be cultivated for enhancing one's life are also discussed. The book closes with a discussion about what it means to abandon the search for any fixed model of the "good society" and embrace instead a "living democracy." Worksheets, an index, and list of resources are included. References accompany each chapter. (LMI)

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